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Ruiten, Jacques T.A.G.M. van

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The Interpretation of Genesis 6:1–12 in *Jubilees* 5:1–19

by

JACQUES T.A.G.M. VAN RUITEN

In this contribution I shall concentrate on the rewriting and interpretation of Gen 6:1–12 in *Jub.* 5:1–19.¹ In order to get a clear picture of the specific way the biblical story was rewritten, I shall take the following steps.² Firstly, I shall give an overall comparison between the story of the Flood in Genesis (Genesis 6–9) and that in *Jubilees* (*Jubilees* 5–6). Secondly, I shall briefly discuss the structure of both Gen 6:1–12 and *Jub.* 5:1–19. Thirdly, I shall compare the passages of the *Book of Jubilees* and Genesis, and give a classification of the dissimilarities. I use the following categories: omission, addition, variation in sequence, and difference other than these categories. Finally, I shall analyse some of the dissimilarities in more detail. It is not always clear whether the differences should be attributed to certain exegetical techniques of the author, to certain traditional elements (Haggadic or Halachic from biblical and non-biblical sources) which exert influence on the *Book of Jubilees*, or to tendencies of the author or the group he is involved in. In this way, one can draw a picture of the hermeneutical presuppositions of the author of *Jubilees* and of the specific way in which he rewrote the biblical story.

An Overall Comparison of Genesis 6–9 and *Jubilees* 5–6

The text of *Jubilees* 5–6 consists of a rewriting and interpretation of the biblical story of the Flood (Gen 6–9).³ As far as the content is concerned, most

¹ *Jubilees* was written somewhere in the middle of the second century BCE. This is not the place to explore the exact date. For a discussion see, e.g., Charles, lvii–lxvi; Davenport, 10–18; VanderKam, *Textual and Historical Studies*, 214–285; Nickelsburg, 78; Berger, 298–300; Wintermute, 43–44; Schürer, 308–318.

² Research on biblical interpretation in *Jubilees*, as far as *Jubilees* 19–45 is concerned, has been done by Endres. On 16–17 he sketches the following methodological framework: 1. Isolation of elements of the biblical tradition which can be achieved through a synoptic viewing of pertinent sections; 2. identification of Haggadic elements which derive from non-biblical texts; 3. discerning the compositional techniques and tendencies. See the critical review of Endres' book by M. Fishbane in *JBL* 107 (1988) 526–528. See also: VanderKam, *Biblical Interpretation*, 96–125.

³ Besides, an anticipation to the Flood occurs in the vision of Enoch in *Jubilees* 4 (vv. 15,

parts of the biblical account of the Flood do also occur in the rendering of *Jubilees*: the introduction (Gen 6:5–13; *Jub.* 5:1–19), the order to build the ark (Gen 6:14–7:5; *Jub.* 5:20–22), the entrance (Gen 7:7–9, 13–16; *Jub.* 5:23), the Flood, from the opening of the fountains until the prevailing of the waters (Gen 7:6, 7b, 10–12, 17–24; *Jub.* 5:24–28), and the closing of the fountains and the end of the Flood (Gen 8:1–14; *Jub.* 5:29–31), and finally the leaving of the ark (Gen 8:15–19; *Jub.* 5:32) and the reactions (Gen 8:20–9:17; *Jub.* 6:1–38).

Although the story runs parallel in both texts, there are also differences. It is striking that the story in *Jub.* 5:1–19 very much emphasizes the *motivation* of the Flood. In *Jubilees*, the motivation of Gen 6:5–13 is connected with the text immediately preceding the story of the Flood, Gen 6:1–4, the story of the intercourse of the sons of God with the daughters of men. Besides, much attention is paid to the *consequences* of the story. Not only the offering of Noah and the commandment to Noah (the prohibition of eating flesh from a living animal) in connection with the covenant are described, but also two elaborations are added, one concerning the feast of *Shebuot* (*Jub.* 6:17–31), and one concerning the calendar (*Jub.* 6:32–38). The nature of the elaboration in *Jub.* 6:17–38 makes clear that the author of *Jubilees* can be found in priestly circles.⁴

Much less attention is paid to the story itself. The order to build the ark and the execution of it takes only two verses (*Jub.* 5:21–22), whereas the MT uses seven verses (Gen 6:14–18a, 22; 7:5;). The entrance into the ark and the beginning of the Flood are described in just five verses (*Jub.* 5:23–28), whereas the MT uses twenty-five verses (Gen 6:18b–21; 7:1–4, 6–24). The end of the Flood, the drying of the earth, and the leaving of the ark take only four verses (*Jub.* 5:29–32), whereas the MT uses nineteen verses (Gen 8:1–19). Elements which are *omitted* entirely by the author of *Jubilees* are the repentance of God (Gen 6:5–7), the structure and the measurements of the ark (Gen 6:15–16),⁵ the order to enter into the ark and to load it (Gen 6:18b–21; 7:1–4) and the order to leave the ark (Gen 8:15–17). The omission of the embarkation results in the omission of the mention of the number of animals and the reference to clean and unclean animals. In addition, the mention of the destruction of all flesh (Gen 7:21–23), and the opening of the window and the sending of the raven and the dove (Gen 8:6–13) are also omitted.

19, 22–24), whereas in *Jub.* 7:20–25 and *Jub.* 10:1–7 the author refers back to it. I refrain here from dividing the biblical story of the Flood into a Priestly and a Yahwistic version. The author of *Jubilees* takes into account a biblical text of Genesis in which both versions were already fused together. For a discussion about the compositional nature of the Flood story in Genesis, I refer to the commentaries. See also Emerton.

⁴ Cf. VanderKam, *The Righteousness of Noah*, 20–21.

⁵ The significance of the structure and measurements does not interest the author of *Jubilees*. A lot of attention to the structure and measurements is paid by Philo and others.

The overall comparison between the story of the Flood in *Jubilees* and in Genesis shows that the actual story is severely shortened in *Jubilees*. Besides, the author of the *Book of Jubilees* also tries to make the story more coherent. He avoids doublets, and sometimes he adapts the sequence of events.⁶ Finally, much emphasis is put on the dating of the story.⁷

Genesis 6:1–12 and Jubilees 5:1–19

Before I compare Gen 6:1–12 and *Jub.* 5:1–19, I shall briefly discuss the structure of both texts. Form-critical and stylistic arguments point to the division of Gen 6:1–8:19 into two parts, Gen 6:1–4 on the one hand, and Gen 6:5–8:19 on the other. The text of Gen 6:1–4 is marked off from its literary context.⁸ I refer to the very beginning of the text וַיְהִי כִּי הָחָל הָאָדָם (“When men began to multiply”). After the first phrase, the “sons of God” plays a part in the story. When they appear in the Bible, the story of Gen 6:1–4 unfolds itself, when they disappear, the story ends. The “daughters of men” are also clearly recognizable characters in Gen 6:1–4. Although they are not absent in Gen 5:1–32, all emphasis in Gen 5:1–32 is on the “sons of men”.⁹ In the plot of Gen 6:1–4, especially the interruption in v. 3 is striking.¹⁰ Vv. 1–2 and v. 4 deal with the interaction of the sons of God and the daughters of men. The background of

⁶ This is a form of harmonization, which is one of the most important characteristics of early Jewish exegesis. Cf. Vermes, 60–91 (esp. 69); Childs, 648–649; cf. Endres, 224.

⁷ The biblical version already pays a lot of attention to it (Gen 7:4, 6, 10–12, 17; 8:3–6, 10, 12, 13–14), but in *Jubilees* the chronology seems to get even more emphasis. The author omits much of the story of the Flood, but he does take up and elaborate the chronology. I point to *Jub.* 5:22–23, 25, 27, 29–32. The addition of the dates to the story of the Flood seems to be a justification of the calendar of the author which was not generally accepted.

⁸ For the following, see van Wolde, 29–41 (esp. 30). Cf. Westermann, 490–517 (esp. 494–495).

⁹ Although form-critical and stylistic arguments point to the division of Gen 6:1–8:19 into two parts, Gen 6:1–4 on the one hand, and Gen 6:5–8:19 on the other, there are some connections between Gen 6:1–4 and Gen 6:5–8. I point to the opposition between Gen 6:2 (“The sons of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful [וַיַּבְהִי]”) and Gen 6:5 (“YHWH saw that the wickedness of man [רַעַת הָאָדָם] was great ...”). Moreover, there is an opposition between the sons of God and YHWH. Whereas the sons of God see something good in the world, YHWH sees only wickedness.

¹⁰ The use of verbal forms in Gen 6:1–4 points at first sight to a division of the text in two parts: vv. 1–3 and v. 4. The verbal form used in vv. 1–3 is *Wayyiqtol* (inverted future). The first *Wayyiqtol* form (וַיְהִי) puts the story into action. The other *Wayyiqtol* forms unfold the story (וַיִּקְחוּ, וַיֵּצְאוּ, וַיִּבְנוּ). Gen 6:4 departs from vv. 1–3. By the use of a noun (הַנְּפִלִים) at the beginning of the sentence, the narrative is interrupted. The verbal clauses (vv. 1–3) are replaced by a compound nominal clause. The use of other verbal forms, a *Qatal* form (וַיִּבְנוּ), a *Yiqtol* form (וַיִּבְנוּ) and the *Qatal* form (וַיִּבְנוּ) interrupts the *Wayyiqtol* chain of vv. 1–3 to denote that the events in vv. 1–3 took place in ancient times. For the grammatical terms see Joüon – Muraoka, par. 118; Niccacci, 159.

the story is given in v. 1 (men multiply on the earth), the actual story takes place in v. 2 and v. 4. The actions described are: the sons of God *saw* the daughters of men (v. 2a), they *took* them (v. 2b), they *came in* to the daughters of men (v. 4) and they (the daughters) *gave birth* for them (v. 4). The final sentence of v. 4 is the goal of the story ("These are the mighty men"). As far as the form and the content are concerned, Gen 6:3 is odd in its context. It falls outside the scope of the narrative Gen 6:1–2, 4. Gen 6:4 continues Gen 6:2. The judgement of God in Gen 6:3 concerns people, whereas the "sons of God" are responsible for that which happened in Gen 6:1–2, 4. Several exegetes have argued that v. 3 is a later interpolation. It can be seen as a criticism or polemic against the mythological story of vv. 1–2, 4.¹¹

The second part of the text, Gen 6:5–12, is part of a more extensive story, i.e. the story of the Flood. It forms the introduction, and betrays the compositional nature of the text,¹² the different elements of the introduction are told twice: the motivation (v. 5 [J], vv. 11–12 [P]; cf. v. 13a [P]), the decision to bring the Flood (vv. 6–7 [J]; cf. v. 13b [P]) and the decision to rescue Noah (v. 8 [J]; cf. v. 9–10 [P]).

After the author of *Jubilees* has concluded his rewriting of the genealogy of Gen 5:1–32 with the mentioning of the birth of the sons of Noah (*Jub.* 4:33), he starts the rewriting of the story of the Flood (*Jubilees* 5–6) with *Jub.* 5:1–19, which can be seen as the introduction to *Jub.* 5:20–32, which is the actual story of the Flood. As said before, I confine myself to the introduction, *Jub.* 5:1–19.¹³ This passage starts with the motivation of the story (*Jub.* 5:1–3). It supplies background information. The intercourse of the sons of God with the daughters of men results in the birth of giants and the increasing of wickedness on the earth. The motivation is followed by the announcement of judgement (*Jub.* 5:4–8), first on people and all flesh (v. 4) together with the mentioning of the rescue of Noah (v. 5), then on the angels (v. 6) and finally on the giants (vv. 7–8). The announcement is followed by the execution of judgement (*Jub.* 5:9–20). The mention of the groups occurs in reverse order. First on the giants (v. 9), then on the angels (vv. 10–11), then the decision to rescue Noah is mentioned (v. 19) and finally the decision to destroy everything (v. 20). The structure of *Jub.* 5:4–20 can thus be seen as an envelope structure: A "people and all flesh" (v. 4); B "rescue of Noah" (v. 5); C "angels" (v. 6); D "giants" (vv. 7–8); D' "giants" (v. 9); C' "angels" (vv. 10–11); B' "decision to rescue Noah" (v. 19); A' "decision to destroy everything" (v. 20). This structure shows that *Jub.* 5:12–18 falls out of context. *Jub.* 5:12 speaks about a new creation, vv. 13–16 about a coming judgement, and vv. 17–18 about the mercy of God on the children of Israel if they repent.

¹¹ See, e.g., Loretz, 31–48.

¹² See note 3.

¹³ A translation of *Jub.* 5:1–19 can be found below.

A Synopsis of Genesis 6:1–12 and Jubilees 5:1–19

In the following synopsis of Gen 6:1–12 and *Jub.* 5:1–5, I put **in bold face** the elements of Gen 6:1–12 which do not occur in *Jub.* 5:1–5, and vice versa. I underline those elements that show a variation in sequence. I put in *italics* those differences between Gen 6:1–12 and *Jub.* 5:1–5, other than addition, omission or variation in sequence. In “normal script” are the corresponding elements between both texts.¹⁴

MT Gen 6:1–12

Jub. 5:1–5

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>6:1a When <i>men</i> began to multiply on the face of the earth,</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b and daughters were born to them,</p> <p>2a <i>the sons</i> of God saw that the daughters of men were beautiful;</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b they took to wife such of them as they chose.</p> <p>3a <u>Then YHWH said,</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b <u>“My spirit shall not remain in man for ever,</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">c <u>for <i>he</i> is also flesh,</u></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">d <u>but <i>his</i> days shall be a hundred and twenty years”.</u></p> <p>4a The Nephilim were on the earth in those days, and also afterward,</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b when the sons of God came in to the daughters of men,</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">c and they gave birth for them.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">d These were <i>the mighty men that were of old, the men of renown.</i></p> <p>5a YHWH saw that</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><i>the wickedness of man was great on the earth</i></p> | <p>1a When <i>the children of men</i> began to multiply on the face of the entire earth</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b and daughters were born to them,</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">c <i>the angels</i> of God – in a certain year of this jubilee – saw that they were beautiful to look at.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">d They took to wife such of them as they chose.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">e They gave birth to children for them.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">f And they were <i>giants.</i></p> <p>2a And iniquity increased on the earth.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b <u>All flesh corrupted its way – from people to cattle, and to animals, and to birds, and to everything that moves about on the ground.</u></p> |
|--|---|

¹⁴ Biblical verses are quoted according to the Revised Standard Version with slight modifications to facilitate the comparison. The quotations of *Jubilees* in this article are based on J. C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, vol. 2. For the sake of the comparison, I sometimes felt obliged to change the translation of VanderKam on minor points on the basis of the Ethiopic. The Ethiopic text of *Jubilees* is edited by J. C. VanderKam, *The Book of Jubilees*, vol. 1. Other translations can be found in Charles; Berger; P. Sacchi, 179–411; Díez Macho, vol. 2, 67–193; Wintermute.

- 5b and that every **imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil** all days.
- 2c All of them corrupted their way and their ordinances.
 d **They began to devour one another.**
 e **And iniquity increased on the earth,**
 f and every thought *of the knowledge of all people* was evil like this, all days.
- 3a And God saw the earth
 b and behold, it was corrupt.
 c And all flesh had corrupted its ordinances.
 d **And all of them acted wickedly before His eyes, everyone that was on the earth.**
- 6a **And YHWH was sorry that he had made man on earth,**
 b **and it grieved him to his heart.**
- 7a So YHWH said,
 b “I will obliterate man whom I have created *from the face of the earth, from people to cattle, to creeping things and to birds of the heaven* **for I am sorry that I have made them**”
- 8 But Noah found favour in the eyes of YHWH.
- 9a **These are the generations of Noah.**
 b **Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation;**
 c **Noah walked with God.**
- 10 **And Noah had three sons, Sem, Ham and Japheth.**
- 11a **Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight,**
 b **and the earth was filled with violence.**
- 12a And God saw the earth,
 b and behold, it was corrupt;
 c for all flesh had corrupted its way upon the earth.
- 4a And He said
 b (that) He would obliterate people, **and all flesh** on the face of the earth, which He had created.
- 5 But Noah **alone** found favour in His eyes.

Jub. 5:6–19 (unparalleled in Gen 6:1–12; on *Jub. 5:8* see below)

(6) And against His angels whom He sent to the earth He was very angry, so as to uproot them from all their authority. And He told us to tie them up in the depths of the earth. And behold, (now) they are tied within them, and they are alone. (7) And against their children there went out a word from before His face that they should be smitten with the

sword, and be removed from beneath the heaven. (8) And He said: “My spirit will not remain in man forever, for they are flesh. And their days shall be a hundred and twenty years”. (9) And He sent His sword among them so that they would kill one another. And they began to kill each other until all of them fell by the sword and were obliterated from the earth. (10) Now their fathers were watching. And after this they were tied up in the depths of the earth until the great day of judgement when there will be condemnation on all who have corrupted their ways and their actions before God. (11) And He obliterated all from their places. There remained no one of them whom he did not judge for all their wickedness. (12) And He made a new and righteous creation for all His work, so that they would not sin in their whole creation, all days. Everyone will be righteous, each according to his kind, for all time. (13) And the judgement of them all has been ordained and written on the heavenly tablets; there is no injustice. (As for) all who transgress from their way in which it was ordained for them to go, if they do not go in it, judgement has been written down for each creature and for each kind. (14) There is nothing which is in heaven or on the earth, in the light, the darkness, Sheol, the deep, or in the dark place, all their judgements have been ordained, written and inscribed. (15) He will exercise judgement regarding each person, the great one in accord with his greatness and the small one in accord with his smallness, each one in accord with his way. (16) He is not one who shows favouritism nor one who takes a bribe, if he says He will execute judgement against each person. If a person gave everything on earth He would not show favouritism nor would He accept (it) from him because He is the righteous judge. (17) Regarding the Israelites it has been written and ordained: “If they turn to Him in the right way, He will forgive all their wickedness and will pardon all their sins”. (18) It has been written and ordained that He will have mercy on all who turn from all their errors once each year. (19) To all who corrupted their ways and their plan(s) before the Flood no favour was shown except to Noah alone because favour was shown to him for the sake of his children whom he saved from the flood waters for his sake because his mind was righteous in all his ways, as it had been commanded concerning him. He did not transgress from anything that had been ordained for him.

To some extent *Jub.* 5:1–19 can be considered as a rewriting of Gen 6:1–12. In fact *Jub.* 5:1 is the rewriting of Gen 6:1–2, 4, *Jub.* 5:2–5 of Gen 6:5–12, and *Jub.* 5:8 of Gen 6:3. As can be seen in the synopsis, there are not only resemblances between *Jub.* 5:1–19 and Gen 6:1–12 but also many differences. I point to the omissions (Gen 6:4ab, part of 4d–5a, 6ab, part of 7b, 7c, 9–11), the extensive additions (*Jub.* 5:2b–e, 3d, 6–7, 9–19), variation in sequence (Gen 6:3 and *Jub.* 5:8; Gen 6:12 and *Jub.* 5:3) and other differences throughout the text. In fact only *Jub.* 5:1–5 is a rewriting of the text of Gen 6:1–12. In what follows, I shall analyse some of the dissimilarities between Gen 6:1–12 and *Jub.* 5:1–19 in more detail.

Jubilees 5:1 and Genesis 6:1–2, 4

The text of *Jub.* 5:1 is the rewriting of Gen 6:1–2, 4, but it is not merely a copy of it. Certain elements of Gen 6:1–2, 4 are omitted in *Jub.* 5:1. I point to “the daughters of men” (Gen 6:2a), to Gen 6:4ab altogether, and to “that were of

old, the men of renown" (Gen 6:4d). Other elements are added by the author of *Jub.* 5:1. I point to "entire" (*Jub.* 5:1a), to "in a certain year of this jubilee" (*Jub.* 5:1c),¹⁵ to "to look at" (*Jub.* 5:1c),¹⁶ to "children" (*Jub.* 5:1e) and to "and" (*Jub.* 5:1f). When we leave Gen 6:3 aside, there is no variation in sequence in *Jub.* 5:1 with regard to Gen 6:1–2, 4. Other differences are the reading "children of men" (*Jub.* 5:1a) instead of "men" (Gen 6:1a), "the angels of God" (*Jub.* 5:1c) instead of "the sons of God" (Gen 6:2a), and "giants" instead of "the mighty men" (Gen 6:4d). The most striking differences are "the angels of God" and the view that the giants were the offspring of the intercourse between the daughters of men and the angels of God.

The rewriting of "sons of God" into "angels of God" reflects the oldest interpretation of Gen 6:2, 4.¹⁷ It occurs in *1 Enoch* 6–11 (first half of the second century BCE.),¹⁸ but it originated long before then.¹⁹ The oldest reading of the LXX is probably "sons of God" (οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ). Later in the history of the manuscripts of the LXX it was altered into οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ in Gen 6:2.²⁰ Later on the "sons of God" were interpreted as humans wielding power, and finally as righteous men, the Sethites.²¹

The text of *Jub.* 5:1ef rewrites only a small part of Gen 6:4. The omission of Gen 6:4ab may reflect a problem in the biblical text of Gen 6:4a. The subject (נַפְלִיִּם) with which the compound nominal clause starts is mentioned at a moment when the chain of actions, which started in Gen 6:2 (they saw, they took), is not yet finished. Only in Gen 6:4b–d is the action completed (they came in, they give birth to mighty men). The mentioning of the *Nephilim* does interrupt this chain of actions. It is possible to interpret Gen 6:4 in a way describing that the (natural) intercourse of the sons of God with the daughters of men was followed by the birth of mighty men (הַגִּבּוֹרִים), which were appreciated ("the men of renown") because they were born to fight against the נַפְלִיִּם. These *Nephilim* can be interpreted as "giants" because of Num 13:33 ("And there we saw the Nephilim [the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim];

¹⁵ The dating of the story of the sons of God refers back to the genealogy of Noah (*Jub.* 4:33).

¹⁶ In other versions, this addition cannot be found. See however Targum Neofiti, that has נִיחָ.

¹⁷ See Alexander, 60–71; Salvesen, 31.

¹⁸ The interpretation "angels" is supposed in the whole text of *1 Enoch* 6–11, but see especially *1 Enoch* 6:2 ("And the angels, the sons of heaven") which is a rewriting of Gen 6:2.

¹⁹ The rendering "angels" also occurs in Philo (*De Gigantibus* 2:6), Josephus (*Ant.* 1:73), and *Testament of Reuben* 5:7.

²⁰ So Alexander, 16. Harl takes it the other way around. According to her "sons of God" is a return to the Hebrew text. The Greek text originally read "angels of God" which avoids a shocking anthropomorphism (125).

²¹ The reaction against the rendering "angels" is first expressed by R. Simeon b. Johai (around 150 AD) in *Bereshit Rabbah* 26:5. He translates as "son of the nobles" and cursed anyone who called them "the sons of God". Cf. Alexander, 61; Salvesen, 31.

and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them”).²² They were already on the earth, and were a danger to men.²³ However, many of the ancient versions identify נפלים with הגברים.²⁴ In that case the *Nephilim*, interpreted as giants, were the offspring of the intercourse of the daughters of men and the sons of God. Also according to the *Book of Jubilees* the giants were the offspring of the intercourse of the daughters of men and the angels of God. If the author of *Jubilees* knew the identification of the “mighty men” with the “Nephilim”, as we found in many versions, then the mentioning of the giants in Gen 6:4a is inaccurate. It is odd to say that the giants were on earth (Gen 6:4a) before they were born (Gen 6:4cd). The omission of Gen 6:4ab betrays the tendency to make the story more coherent. The omission of “the men of renown” (Gen 6:4d) shows that these giants were not appreciated. They were not the mighty men, but negative figures that brought harm to the people.²⁵ This disapproval is confirmed by the smooth transition from *Jub.* 5:1 to *Jub.* 5:2–3. In *1 Enoch* 6–11, we find the same negative interpretation of the giants. This means that the rewriting of Gen 6:1–2, 4 in *Jub.* 5:1 possibly reflects a traditional view of the passage, which we find also in *1 Enoch* and some ancient versions.

Jubilees 5:2–5 and Genesis 6:5–12

The text of *Jub.* 5:2–5 can be considered as a rewriting of Gen 6:5–12. I refer to the parallel texts of *Jub.* 5:2f and Gen 6:5b, of *Jub.* 5:3a–c and Gen 6:12, of *Jub.* 5:4 and Gen 6:7ab, and of *Jub.* 5:5 and Gen 6:8. In these parallel texts differences can also be found. I point to *Jub.* 5:2f (see the omission of “imagination” of Gen 6:5b, the transformation of “of his heart” into “of the knowledge of all people”, and of “only” into “like this”), to *Jub.* 5:3c (“and” instead of “for” in Gen 6:12c), to *Jub.* 5:4a (“He said” instead of “YHWH said” in Gen 6:7a), to *Jub.* 5:4b (third person singular instead of first singular in Gen 6:7b), and to *Jub.* 5:5 (“His eyes” instead of “the eyes of YHWH”).

There are also other differences. Several elements of Gen 6:5–12 are *omitted* in *Jub.* 5:2–5. I point to “YHWH saw” and “man” (Gen 6:5a), to the repentance of YHWH (Gen 6:6, 7c), and to Gen 6:9–11, the introduction to the Priestly

²² The interpretation “giants” for נפלים is common to the majority of the ancient versions (LXX, Theodotion, Vulgate, Samaritan Targum, Targum Onqelos, Targum Neofiti). Cf. Salvesen, 33. For the “sons of Anak” see also Num 13:22, 28; Deut 1:28; 2:10, 11, 21; 9:1; Josh 11:21, 22; 14:12, 15; 15:13, 14; 21:11; Judg 1:20.

²³ See, e.g., Bartelmus, 156–159.

²⁴ So LXX, Symmachus, Targum Onqelos, Targum Neofiti, the Samaritan Targum, and the Peshitta.

²⁵ See also *Jub.* 7:21–25.

version of the Flood story. Other elements are *added* in *Jub.* 5:2–5: “and” (*Jub.* 5:2a), “all flesh corrupted its way” (*Jub.* 5:2b), “everything” (*Jub.* 5:2b), *Jub.* 5:2c–e altogether, *Jub.* 5:3d, “and all flesh” (*Jub.* 5:4b), “alone” (*Jub.* 5:5). Some of the additional material in *Jub.* 5:2–5 seems to be influenced by the text of Gen 6:5–12. The text of *Jub.* 5:2a and *Jub.* 5:2e is probably a mixture of Gen 6:5a (“... the wickedness ... was great on the earth”) and Gen 6:11b (“and the earth was filled with violence”). *Jub.* 5:2b contains elements of Gen 6:12c and Gen 6:7b”, *Jub.* 5:2c is related to Gen 6:12c which also occurs in *Jub.* 5:3c. Finally, variation in sequence can be found in *Jub.* 5:2b, which corresponds to Gen 6:7b with some alterations, and in *Jub.* 5:3, which corresponds closely with Gen 6:12.

Some of the alterations of *Jub.* 5:2–5 with regard to Gen 6:5–12 are caused by exegesis. The omission of the opening words of Gen 6:5 (“YHWH saw that”) by the author of *Jubilees* can be seen as part of his attempt to avoid doublets, and to adapt the sequence of events in order to make the story more coherent. The statement of Gen 6:5a has much in common with Gen 6:12ab. The author of *Jubilees* does omit Gen 6:5a, but does take over Gen 6:12ab. Moreover, he transfers Gen 6:12 to *Jub.* 5:3. With these transformations, the author of *Jubilees* makes the story more coherent. The different elements of the introduction of the Flood (Gen 6:5–13) are told twice: the motivation (v. 5, vv. 11–12; cf. v. 13a), the decision to bring the Flood (vv. 6–7; cf. v. 13b) and the decision to rescue Noah (v. 8; vv. 13ff.). The author of *Jubilees* smooths it by mentioning every element once: the motivation (*Jub.* 5:2–3), the decision to bring the Flood (*Jub.* 5:4), and the rescue of Noah (*Jub.* 5:5). By omitting the first time that God saw the earth (Gen 6:5a), the author of *Jubilees* achieves a smooth transition from the story of the Watchers to the Flood story. Other elements in the attempt to make the story more coherent are the omission of “man” (Gen 6:5a) and the transmission of Gen 6:7b (“... from people to cattle ...”) to *Jub.* 5:2. In the text of Genesis, YHWH sees the wickedness of *man* (Gen 6:5a) and then punishes *all creatures* (Gen 6:7b). In Gen 6:12, it is stated that “*all flesh* had corrupted its way”. In *Jubilees* *all flesh* corrupted its way (*Jub.* 5:2), and therefore God obliterates people *and all flesh* (*Jub.* 5:4).

The omission of the mentioning of the repentance of God (Gen 6:6, 7c) has to do with the hermeneutical assumption that imperfection of God in His work is impossible. Therefore the author of *Jubilees* cannot accept the divine repentance, for His foreknowledge would preclude actions which He would later regret. Also LXX Gen 6:6 avoids mentioning repentance. God only reflects that he has made man.²⁶

²⁶ Cf. Salvesen, 34–36. For the repentance of God in the Hebrew Bible, see especially Jeremias.

The omission of Gen 6:9–10 can probably be explained by the fact that in the genealogy in *Jub.* 4:33, which is a rewriting of Gen 5:32, the sons of Noah are already mentioned. The fact that Noah is righteous is mentioned in *Jub.* 5:19.

Most phrases of *Jub.* 5:2–5 can be related to Gen 6:5–12 in one way or another. The only phrase with has no relationship to Gen 6:5–12 is *Jub.* 5:2d (“They began to devour each other”). This probably refers to *1 Enoch* 7:3–5 which describes how the offspring of the Watchers, the giants, first consume the produce of all people, and then began to eat people. They sin against various kinds of animals, and eat one another.²⁷

Jubilees 5:8 and Genesis 6:3

As already mentioned, *Jub.* 5:8 is a rendering of Gen 6:3, which is taken out of its immediate context. It is nearly identical to LXX Gen 6:3. The Hebrew text of Gen 6:3 contains certain difficulties, and the rendering of the biblical verse in *Jub.* 5:8 reflects some of the difficulties of this text.

As far as the form and the content are concerned, Gen 6:3 is odd in its context. It falls outside the scope of the narrative Gen 6:1–2, 4. Gen 6:4 continues Gen 6:2. The statement of God in Gen 6:3 is a reflection on what He has decided. The statement consists of a negative decree (viz., “my spirit shall not ... forever”) and a positive one (“His days shall be a hundred and twenty years”). The judgement of God concerns people. This does not fit very well into the context, since the “sons of God” are responsible for that which happened in Gen 6:1–2, 4. However, in the biblical text, nothing is said about their punishment nor about the guilt of people. In the history of the interpretation, the meaning of the phrase “his days shall be a hundred and twenty years” is regarded as referring either to the maximum life span of mankind²⁸ or to the life span of the generation before the Flood.²⁹

With regard to this problem, it is striking to see that in the text of *Jubilees* the rewriting of Gen 6:3 is dislocated and joined to the judgement on the giants. As far as I can see, this is a reflection on the problem that, in the biblical text, nothing is said about the punishment of the sons of God nor about the guilt of people. By not referring the statement of Gen 6:3 to man in general,

²⁷ See VanderKam, *Enoch Traditions*, 229–251 (esp. 237). The theme of mutual devouring occurs also *1 Enoch* 86:5–6; 87:1. Cf. *1 Enoch* 10:9.

²⁸ Westermann, 507.

²⁹ E.g., LXX Gen 6:3 (“My spirit shall not abide in *those* men for ever”), and the Targumim e.g. *Targum Onqelos*: “And the Lord said: ‘This wicked generation shall not endure before me forever, because they are flesh, and their deeds are evil; let an extension be granted to them for 120 years, (to see) if they will repent’”).

but to a specific kind of people, viz. the mortal offspring of the sons of God and the daughters of man, the judgement is more adequate. Moreover, this means that the author of *Jubilees* does not interpret the “hunderd and twenty years” as the maximum life span of mankind in general, but as the life span of the generation before the Flood, that means the giants. Besides, the life span of a hundred and twenty years does not fit in the context of Genesis, since the life span of the Patriarchs exceeds a hundred and twenty years. By transposing the text and by referring it to the generation before the Flood, viz., the giants, the author of *Jubilees* has solved his problem.³⁰

The second problem in the Hebrew text of Gen 6:3 is the meaning of יִדּוֹן. According to the lexicons, this word could be derived from the root דָּן, but this root gets no explanation.³¹ In modern commentaries, considerable effort has been put into the explanation of the word, but no consensus exists.³² In the old translations יִדּוֹן is either read as a form of the root דָּן (“to judge”)³³ or interpreted as a form of יָלוּן/יָדוּר (“to dwell, to remain”).³⁴ The author of *Jubilees* interprets יִדּוֹן, for which the lexicons have no explanation, as “to dwell”.³⁵ The same interpretation can be found in LXX and later in 4Q252.³⁶ However, the author of *Jubilees* shows implicitly, with the addition of *Jub.* 5:6–18, that יִדּוֹן can be interpreted as a form of the verb דָּן which means “execute judgement, contend with”.³⁷

The third problem in the biblical text is the meaning of בְּשָׁנִים. In the Masoretic manuscripts, there is a variation between בְּשָׁנִים (with *patah*) and בְּשָׁנִים (with *qames*). In the first reading, the word seems to be a construction of the preposition ב, the relative particle שֶׁ, and the particle שָׁנָה (also). This construction is very difficult to translate properly, because שֶׁ does not occur as a relative particle elsewhere in the Pentateuch, whereas שָׁנָה is also difficult in this context.³⁸ In the second reading, the word seems to be a construction of

³⁰ In the text of *I Enoch* 10:9–10, it is stated that the giants hope to live an eternal life, at least they hope to live five hundred years. By saying that their days shall be a hundred and twenty years, the author of *Jubilees* interprets the dislocated Gen 6:3 as a *punishment* against them.

³¹ E.g., Koehler and Baumgartner, 208.

³² Cf. Speiser, 126–129; Gunkel, 55–58; Loretz, 42–43; Westermann, 506–507.

³³ The root דָּן (“to judge”) is read by *Targums Pseudo-Jonathan* and *Neofiti* (“None of the evil generations to arise in the future will be judged by the order of judgements”); cf. *Pseudo-Philo, Bib. Ant.* 3:2 (“My spirit shall not judge all forever”).

³⁴ E.g., LXX (“My spirit shall not abide”), and *Targum Onkelos* (“This wicked generation shall not endure before me”).

³⁵ Cf. Lewis, 28 (note 4); Bowker, 155.

³⁶ I think that לֹא יָדוּר in the commentary 4Q252 reflects an *interpretation* of the Hebrew text of Gen 6:3, and not a rendering of that text.

³⁷ In contrast, Bowker, *ibid.*, writes: “LXX reads: ‘My spirit will not rest in ...’, which is also the way in which *Jub.* v. 8 understood it, despite its long paragraph on judgement”.

³⁸ Cf. Westermann, 507.

the preposition כּ and a word derived either from the root שָׁגַג (“commit error, sin”) or from the root שָׁגָה (“stray, err, commit sin”)³⁹. The translation is in both cases: “because they sinned”. I am not sure if, for the author of *Jubilees*, the meaning of בְּשָׁגָם was a problem. The phrase הוּא בִּשְׂרָר is rendered as in the LXX: “For *they are* flesh”. The construction בְּשָׁגָם is read as “for”, whereas the plural is used instead of singular.

The Watchers and the Flood

As already said, many elements of the introduction to the Flood are taken over by the author of *Jubilees*. The motivation of the Flood (see Gen 6:5–6, 7b, 11–12, 13a) can be found in *Jub.* 5:2–3, the decision to destroy all men (see Gen 6:7a, 13b) in *Jub.* 5:4, 20, and the decision to rescue Noah (Gen 6:8) in *Jub.* 5:5, 19. It is striking that in the story of *Jub.* 5:1–19 the motivation of the Flood is connected with the text immediately preceding the story of the Flood, Gen 6:1–4, the story of the intercourse of the sons of God with the daughters of men. Moreover, in *Jubilees* the decision to destroy all flesh by means of the Flood is connected with other judgements, viz., the judgement on the angels (*Jub.* 5:6 and *Jub.* 5:10–11: they are bound in the depths of the earth until the day of the great judgement), and the judgement on the giants (*Jub.* 5:7–9: the sending of the sword so that each one might kill his fellow). The text of Genesis is altered and rewritten as a story of the imprisonment of the Watchers and the destruction of their children, combined with elements of the Flood narrative to portray the consequences of lawlessness.⁴⁰

The fact that the story of the sons of God immediately precedes the story of the Flood, makes it easy for the reader to interrelate both stories. In the *biblical* allusions to the story of the Flood,⁴¹ however, the connection between the story of the Flood and the story of the Watchers is not found, but in *post-biblical* early Jewish literature it occurs frequently. I point to the *Damascus Document* (2:14–21) which was written not much later than the *Book of Jubilees*, in which both judgements stand side by side, comparable with *Jub.* 5:1–19:⁴²

And now, my sons listen to me and I shall open your eyes so that you can see and understand the deeds of God, so that you can choose what he is pleased with and repudiate what he hates, so that you can walk perfectly on all his paths and not follow after

³⁹ Infinitivus constructus with suffix 3rd person plural masculine.

⁴⁰ Cf. Davenport, 47.

⁴¹ Explicit references to the story of the Flood can be found in Isa 54:9–10 and Ezek 14:12–23 (esp. vv. 14, 20). Allusions to the Flood can be found in Ps 29:10 and Job 22:15–20. The motif of the Flood can possibly be found in Isa 24:1, 4–5, 18; 26:20–21; Nah 1:8; Ps 18:16; 65:5–8; 69:1; 89:10; 93:3; Dan 9:26. Cf. Lewis, 7–9.

⁴² Cf. also the Wis 14:6 and 2 Pet 2:4–8.

the thoughts of a guilty inclination and lascivious eyes. For many wandered off for these matters; brave heroes yielded on account of them, from ancient times until now. For having walked in the stubbornness of their hearts the Watchers of the heavens fell; on account of it they were caught, for they did not follow the precepts of God. And their sons, whose height was like that of cedars and whose bodies were like mountains, fell. All flesh which there was in the dry earth decayed and became as if it had never been, for having realized their desires and failing to keep their creator's precepts, until his wrath flared up against them (CD 2:14–21).⁴³

In other texts, Noah on the one side, and the sons of God, called the (fallen) angels or the Watchers, on the other, are put into sharp contrast. In the anticipation to the Flood in *Jub.* 4:22–24, and in the reference back to the Flood in *Jub.* 7:20–25, the Flood is seen as the judgement of God because of the behaviour of the sons of God (called the Watchers):

For it was on account of these three things [viz., fornication, pollution and injustice] that the Flood was on the earth. Since (it was) due to fornication that the Watchers had illicit intercourse – apart from the mandate of their authority – with the daughters of men. When they took for themselves wives of them whomever they choose they committed the first (acts) of uncleanness (*Jub.* 7:21).

Also in other early Jewish writings there is the view that the Flood is the punishment for the transgression of the Watchers, e.g the *Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs* (2nd century BCE):⁴⁴

Likewise [as Sodom] the Watchers departed from nature's order; the Lord pronounced a curse on them at the Flood. On their account he ordered that the earth be without dweller or produce (Testament of Naphtali 3:5).

Considering the fact that the connection of the story of the Flood with the story of the Watchers is also found elsewhere in early Jewish literature, the connection in *Jub.* 5:1–19 might be traditional. One piece of evidence can be added. It is striking that the passage *Jub.* 5:4–12, in which the judgements on the men, angels and giants are mentioned, runs very much parallel to *1 Enoch* 10:1–17. To some extent, *1 Enoch* 6–11, like *Jub.* 5:1–19, can be considered as an elaboration of Gen 6:1–4.⁴⁵ Therefore the parallel between *Jub.* 5:4–12 and *1 Enoch* 10:1–17 is interesting.

⁴³ The translation is by García Martínez, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*, 34.

⁴⁴ In 3 Macc 2:4 (1st century BCE) it is written as follows: "You [God] have destroyed men for their wicked deeds in the past, among them giants relying on their own strength and self-confidence, upon whom you brought an immeasurable flood of water". Cf. also Luke 17:26–27 ("As it was in the days of Noah, so will it be in the days of the Son of man. They ate, they drank, they married, they were given in marriage, until the day when Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all").

⁴⁵ See the literal rendering of Gen 6:1–2, 4 in *1 Enoch* 6:1–2; 7:1–2.

<i>Jub. 5:4–12</i>	<i>1 Enoch 10</i>
5:4–5, 19: announcement of the Flood and rescue of Noah	10:1–3: announcement of the Flood by Uriel and rescue of Noah
5:6: judgement against the angels (1)	10:4–6, 8: Raphael proclaims the judgement to Asasel (one of the Watchers)
5:7–9: judgement against the giants; they kill one another by the sword	10:9–10: Gabriel lets the giants destroy one another (cf. 1 En 14:6: “by the sword”)
5:10–11: judgement against the angels (2)	10:11–15: Michael announces to Shemihasa (one of the other Watchers) the judgement
5:12: new nature	10:7, 16–17: new earth

The announcement of the Flood and the rescue of Noah are found in both texts, followed by the judgement against the angels, the judgement against the giants, then the judgement against the angels again, and finally the new nature. It is especially striking that the doubling of the judgement against the angels runs parallel with the judgement against Asasel followed by the judgement against Shemihasa. In spite of the structural parallel of the content of both texts, I doubt that the addition of *Jub. 5:(4)6–19* is derived directly from *1 Enoch 6–11*. There are too many differences in wording. Besides, according to *Jubilees*, it is God himself who sent the angels to the earth (*Jub. 5:6*; cf. *Jubilees 4*), whereas in *1 Enoch 6–11* these angels descend out of heaven in an act of rebellion. Possibly the writer of *1 Enoch 6–11* and the writer of *Jub. 5:4–12* take material from the same tradition, but they reconstruct it in their own way. This tradition is possibly the tradition which is identified by some as the so-called “Book of Noah”.⁴⁶

Conclusions

In this article I have tried to show some elements of the process of interpretation in the *Book of Jubilees* in a time when the boundaries of the Hebrew Bible were not yet fixed. The comparison between the relevant parts of *Jub. 5:1–19* and *Gen 6:1–12* showed that the author of *Jubilees* sometimes reproduces the text of Genesis quite literally, but that he also changes his model at other places. He omits certain phrases and passages, and he adds others, while he also modifies passages that run parallel. I have tried to show that the author of *Jubilees* is, in the first place, a careful reader of the biblical text. This text poses some difficulties to him (e.g. doublets, incoherencies). With his rewrit-

⁴⁶ García Martínez, *Qumran and Apocalyptic*, 24–44. Lewis, 14–15, is very sceptical about the existence of a lost book of Noah.

ing, he tries to solve these problems. Harmonisation seems to control some of the rewriting of *Jub.* 5:1–19. I point to the relocation of Gen 6:3, to the omission of Gen 6:4ab, and to the fact that several elements of the introduction to the Flood (Gen 6:5–12) that are told twice in the biblical text are told once in *Jubilees*. Other alterations in the rewriting of *Jub.* 5:1–19, such as the interpretation of “mighty men” (Gen 6:4) as “giants”, and the combination of the judgement on the angels and the giants with the Flood, viz. the addition of *Jub.* 5:6–19, seem not to be caused by exegetical problems, but by current interpretations of the text.

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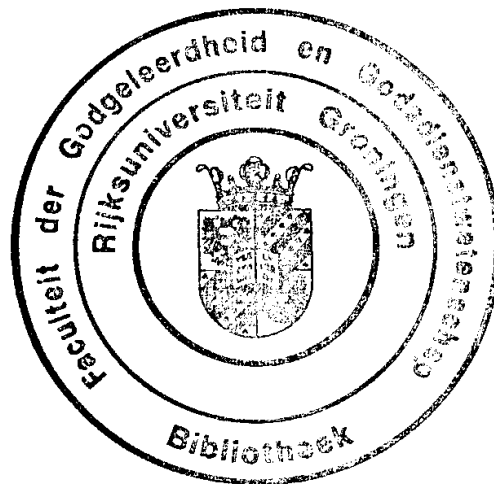
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